A Comparison of Pilgrimage to West and Pilgrim's Progress

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Abstract. Pilgrim's Progress is in the form of dream design and describes the human in the life journey of the path to heaven. Pilgrimage to West also describes the four persons's story of overcoming hardships to India to obtain buddhist scriptures. In this paper, the author comparative analysis of Pilgrim's Progress and Pilgrimage to West and found that both of them used the religious pilgrimage narrative mode, describes the fable characters of atonement experience, promote the spirit of redemption religious doctrine, reveal the social reality of sin. Pilgrim's Progress reveals the thought of the Christian faith and soul redemption, Pilgrimage to West interprets the religious idea of heart Self-enlightenment. This paper attempts to through Pilgrim's Progress and Pilgrimage to West of the religious characteristics and reality of critical comparative analysis and to reveals the vital function of religion in people's life at that time so as to deepen readers' understanding of these two perfect masterpieces.

Introduction

Throughout history, human life always cannot leave the nature and society. On the one hand, the human must depend on nature and society, accepting the gifts of nature and the substance of society. Humans, on the other hand, we should not be satisfied with the present situation. They reform the natural and social performance to get to their ideal world. Literature records the relationship between human and nature and society, reflect the real life of people, and express the ideal society in which human want to achieve. However, because of the difference of Chinese and western culture, the ways people express are also different from each other. In the west, people under the influence of the bible, often show the yearning and pursuit of heaven. In the east, people, influenced by Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, usually want to get to nirvana. Wu Chengen's *Pilgrimage to West* and John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* is the east and the west idealism the magnum opus of literature. Although these two novels written in different countries, at different time, with different background, but a coincidence with religious themes for writing, through the protagonist's travel and pilgrimage, convey their religious belief to the world. *Pilgrim's Progress* reveals the thought of the Christian faith and soul redemption, *Pilgrimage to West* interprets the religious idea of heart Self-enlightenment.

Pilgrim's Progress is a great work of Christian literature. Originally composed in the 17th century, this spiritual allegory has entertained and delighted innumerable readers for over 300 years. It tells a story about Christian, his wife and children go on a pilgrimage to Celestial City from the City of Destruction and finally get to the paradise and gain an eternal life.

The author saw a ragged man in the dream, namely "Christian". His hands holding a Bible, reading while crying, carrying heavy baggage and wandering. He has complained to his wife that he's going to be destroyed by the burden of pressure on him, and he knew that the city which they lived will be burned by the sky fire and no one would be survived, unless they find a save way. Christians don't

know how to save themselves, and a preacher tell them that they should escape from sin and fled to anger. Christian immediately towards the light which the preacher indicated, to the kingdom of heaven to seeking redemption, and began his pilgrim's progress. He began to escape from "the City of Destruction", in which a man named Stubborn dissuaded him and a man called Soft was willing to walk with him, but after a frustrating swamp, they soft struggled out of the mire and left. Christian climb to the top of the swamp with the help of Aid Since then, Christian was cheated by Mr. Old World and went astray, Lucky, with the guidance of Preacher and Good, he took to the right and take into a narrow gate symbolled of the cross. Along the way, Christian overcame numerous difficulties and dangers, suffered from many hardships, after a difficult mountain, the valley of humiliation vanity fair valley of the shadow of death, with the encourage of Virtuous, Piety and Benevolence, finally in the company of hope he crossing the river named death and reached the kingdom of heaven.

Pilgrimage to West is one of the Four Great Classic Novels of Chinese literatures. It was written by Wu Cheng'en in the 16th century during the Ming Dynasty. The novel is a fictional account of the legendary pilgrimage to India of the Buddhist monk Tang. Wu loosely draws materials from the historic text *Great Tang Records on the Western Regions* and traditional folk tale.

This novel mainly described the Monk Tang and his four pupils go to India to obtain Buddhist scriptures, they tried to subdue demons and monsters all the way down, and finally they acquired the true scriptures. It described a journey that was bumpy, with evil blocking the road, temptation to cluster and had numerous difficulties and dangers because of this, Monk Tang and his pupils were thrown into jail again and again, and faced a wall. Tang Monk suffered in Yellow Wind Ridge, resisted by the Mountain of Flames, met the devil in Black Pine. They repeatedly suffered hardships, even the resourceful courage Sun Kukong, feeling discouraged sometimes. For example, when Monk Tang and his pupils went by PingDingShan lotus hole, the Golden Horn and Silver King in order to live forever, they caught Monk Tang and went to eat his flesh; they used a variety of devices to move mountains such as XuMiShan, mount Emei and mount Tai Pin, tweigh of them on Sun Wukong. They captured Monk Tang, Monk Pig and Monk Sandy then tied them to the cave. At this moment, even the well-connected seventy-two changes spell Sun Wukong pearled tears like rain, he didn't know what else he can do. Finally, under the protection of the Gods, with the help of mountains and earth God, the Sun Wukong cast iron bars to battle the demons and make thousand backwards Struggled to fight and overcome the Evil, then rescue Monk Tang. They went to behead the Demon all the way and after eighty-one difficulties, they finally reached the west, retrieved the true five thousand volumes and achieved to the Promised Land.

The Comparison of the Religious Characteristics of Two Novels

Pilgrim's Progress and *Pilgrimage to West* were all in the framework of religious stories. *Pilgrim's progress* was designed in accordance with the Original Sin of Christianity, Faith, Atonement and Salvation. It described a long journey that how the Christian carried the cloth-wrappers named Original Sin, gone to seeking the truth and light. He tempted by many bad people such as Mr. Wisdom at the beginning of his travel. This meant he suffered from a lot of difficulties until he clasped the cross under the save wall, his cloth-wrappers finally fall off. This symbolic that he focused on individual piety and love and worship of God and ultimately enter to the heaven. *Pilgrimage to West* was combination of Taoism, Buddhism and Confucianism in the ancient Chinese ideological system. It mainly accords to the Buddhist ideas such as karma, asceticism salvation, Purdue beings and so on. Monk Tang and his pupils were suffered into human's world because of their previous generation had. And when they decided to obtain Buddhist scriptures as their goal, they got the Deities ever-present help.

The Comparison of Religious Doctrine. The novels were all described the true believers how to pursue their highest realm of religion - the Heaven of Christianity and the Buddhist paradise of Buddhism - and made disaster and ultimately achieved the highest religious ideal. Both characters were the most devout followers of perseverance. In *Pilgrim's Progress*, Christians experienced the test of many temptations such as demon, beauty, wealth, power, suicide, betrayal and so on, even that, they still toward to the Heaven. In *Pilgrimage to West*, the Sun Wukong was a hero of see Evil will and uprooted all Evils being. Monk Tang and his pupils are also faced with many tribulations, but no matter what tribulations they met, the heart they hoping the west never changed. The theme of the novel are obviously advocate creed that human religious have in common - retribution for Sin, praising virtue and punishing vice, tolerance of abstinence, they all publicize that their own religion is the highest and omnipotent.

The *Pilgrim's Progress* was designed by Christian salvation in terms of religious teachings. The leading characters were bore with the iniquity of heavy baggage in the beginning of the book and fled the City of Destruction. He got rid of heavy baggage until he came to the cross. When he experienced the Original Sin of Christianity, Faith, Atonement, Salvation, he eventually converted to God and complete the process of spiritual redemption. Difficulties and obstacles were live with him, and temptation and test were together with him. However, regardless of the snobbish of Mr. Secular, or the temptation of Lord Pollan. Whether the eye dazzling in Vanity Fair, or the fearsome of Giant Scary. He struggled with the Evil constantly, and its faith were grown, and eventually from the City of Sin into the kingdom of Celestial City. The Christians in the novel is the embodiment of human who seek for soul redemption.

As a novel with the theme of religion, *Pilgrim's Progress* was created based on the Bible --the highest classical in western religions. In *Pilgrim's Progress*, the author embraced Christians. Bunyan was a devout Puritan and missionaries, his education mainly come from the book of *Bible*. He was called "a man of one book", he is very familiar with the *Bible*. The Bible's ideology is a pervasive feature of the whole novel. In his mind, everybody was born with Original Sin. People must have self-redemption through salvation of soul, and then came to the paradise to gain the eternal life. This book is filled with the religious ideas of strong tolerance to virtue and all the glory of Christ's and Puritanism of moral self-discipline.

Christians were a symbol of personification that seek a human soul redemption, but Bunyan used it to reveal the connotation of the *Bible* to the world: People are not perfect and born with the original sin, and only with strong belief, reflection of original sin consciousness and strengthen the atonement psychological, can we exempt from iniquity and save the soul, and then have value of presence, realize the ultimate realm of eternal, achieve the individual soul and the divine spirit of unity, and finally obtain the value of life, complete the sublimation of life the and the transcendence of human nature. This is the spirit of western religious orientation.

In *Pilgrimage to West*, the author speaks highly of the thought of having a combination of Taoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism in the ancient Chinese ideological system. In terms of religion, Wu has distinct attitude—preaching Buddhism and satirizing Taoism.

The Buddhism advocates that all living things are equal. It deems that all creatures have absolute freedom and infinite possibility. However, most people cannot realize their wishes for absolute freedom and infinite possibility in real life. These pursuits timelessly exist in their mind, then people just can let it go to the other world—paradise. In the novel, Monk Tang accepts the order from the emperor of Tang Dynasty to get the Buddhist scriptures. He is not for himself, but for all people. They want to educate all people by the Buddhist doctrine, and then make the thought—equality come true.

The Taoism regards survival as pleasure. It advocates achieving infinite extension and directing sublimation of personal life. Its essence is pursuit of immortal. In *Pilgrimage to West*, everybody knows that if he can eat the meat of Monk Tang, then he can be immortal. That is the reflection of Taoism. At the same time, it is also a kind of irony to Taoism. All evils want to seize Monk Tang, eat his body, and then gain an eternal life, but finally they are all defeated by Monkey Sun

Pilgrimage to West is a god-evils novel and has rich religious factors. It doesn't exclude the Confucianism thought. What the novel eulogizes is the thought of benevolent governance. In Chapter 47, after Monkey Sun defeats the three immortals— the Tiger, the Deer, the Sheep in CheChi, he criticizes the emperor of Chechi: "Later on, you can't casually trust anybody, abuse your citizens. I hope that you can make a combination of the Taoism, Buddhist and Confucianism. You'd better respect monks and Taoists, also educate talents. I guarantee that your country will last forever if you do like this."

To a certain extent, the Taoism, Buddhism and Confucianism have fights and communications throughout the novel. Wu doesn't clearly embrace a religion. This may be impacted by the cultural atmosphere in that era. Most scholars, such as Wang Yangming, praised a combination of Taoism, Confucianism and Buddhism.

The Comparison Between "Spirit" and "Heart". In the west, the human is born with guilty because of Adam and Eve. This is the Original Sin. In order to make the soul saved and rebirthed, men firstly should confess and admit his sin and repent. Then he should trust in God, commit them completely to Jesus Christ, only believing in God and rely on God, can man get real happiness. Finally, he could get the forgiveness of God. However, in the east, people should cultivate their heart constantly, combine the culture heart of Confucianism, the quiet heart of Taoism's and the center less heart of unifies Buddhist, to achieve the realm of Nature and Man in One. This is the pursuit of different between east and west, a pursuit of liberation of the soul and a pursuit of the sublimation of the heart. These two novels are fully show the differences between the spirit and heart. They all written that believers should pursuit spiritual holiness and abandoning evil for good, greater faith of the heart and plot development synchronization.

In *Pilgrim's Progress*, the author embraced Christians. In his mind, everybody was born with Original Sin, and people must have self-redemption through salvation of soul, and then came to the paradise to gain the eternal life.

First, the preacher told the Christian that the city where he lived in would be destroyed and then the Christian carried on the Original Sin on his back. Then he must try best to atone for his sin, so he went on the journey to salvation. Finally, he arrived at the paradise. This whole thing can be seen in the novel: "Then said Evangelist, why not willing to die, since this life is attended with so many evils? The man answered, because I fear that this burden that is upon my back will sink me lower than the grave, and I shall fall into Tophet. And, sir, if I do not fit to go to prison, I am not fit to go to judgment and from thence to execution; and the thoughts of these things make me cry." (Bunyan, 2002:110) During his way to get off the burden of the Original Sin, he suffered unimaginable hardships, overcame many difficulties, and ultimately by virtue of strong will and perseverance got access to eternal life of heaven.

The *Pilgrimage to West* expressed Buddhist spiritual journeys of self-salvation. As for Sun Wukong who was born with a heart like a stone, he was an apprentice of Master puti who was a Taoist in the beginning of *Pilgrimage to West*. Although Sun learned many great skills from Master puti, he never had any changes on his mind. At the end, he gained soul purification under the influence of Buddhism on the journey to western paradise.

At the same time, in the material life, people were not free, but they could achieve self-redemption and made themselves pure by pilgrimage. Freedom and equality was the highest realm in the Buddhists' mind. Sun Wukong, who was from creating a tremendous uproar in the heaven to following Monk Tang. Monk Pig, from lusting after marriage to burning the Yun Zhan hole. The Monk Sandy, from living on eating people all day to being a cautious Buddhist, they all have big changes. Their pilgrimage reflects a different notion of freedom against common customs. They find their freedom of own soul.

The Comparison of Critical Spirit

The most common characteristic of two novels were profound reality and strong critical Religion. It not only a kind of cognitive belief, but also a kind of hope rooted in reality. Religious ideals always associate with the reality, and it expresses the writer's cognitions of the reality and hopes of reforming the reality. Both two novels regard characters' experiences as clues, comprehensively show pictures of social life, and thus widely expose the evils in realistic society.

The author Bunyan and Wu Chengen, both represent the interests of the lower class, they have common lowly origins, experienced many pains and have keen observation. This is an important reason of forming novel realism and critical.

Wu Chengen, the author of *Pilgrimage to West*, was born in a very poor family, but his grandfather and father received high education. Wu read many books and listened to many stories about monks when he was young. These were very important for his later writing. In Ming Dynasty, he did not have chance to show his intelligence although he had high literary and artistic talent. He took part in civil service exam many times but failed because of the political corruption. He did not have enough money to bribe the official. And then his living became poorer and poorer. In his late years, by means of his life experiences and some man-told stories he heard before, Wu chose the story that Tang went on a pilgrimage to west for Buddhist scriptures as the main material to show his gloominess about the Ming Dynasty and the cruel social reality.

John Bunyan, the author of *Pilgrim's Progress*, was also born in a very poor family; he did not have enough time and money to go to school. When he was 16 years old, he joined the army. In the army, many soldiers were puritans. This phenomenon deeply influenced him. Then after he retired from the army, he began to preach. However, in 1660, Bunyan experienced something that he did not experience before. Charles II returned to the throne, and the parliament prohibited preaching and the people who disobedient of the nonconformist was sentenced to prison. Bunyan realized that these were not in line with the Bible, so he stood up to fight. As a result, he was sentenced to prison for nearly 12 years. During this time, he tried his best to write the novel *Pilgrim's Progress*.

Criticism of the Evils of Society. These two novels use characters' experience as clues, encyclopedic introduction to the social life and widely expose the reality of social evils. For example, the Hero suffering the Valley of Shame and the Lord, O Wave theory, is the refraction of Stuart dynasty autocratic rule. There was a famous description of "vanity fair" in the novel. In "vanity fair", Honors, Offices, Bodies and Souls were goods, but there is no Truth. Hoodlums, murders and Fraud were full of everywhere. If Christians want to buy Truth, they would be beaten even sentenced to death. This episode typically represented the restoration period of evil power and the masses had no means to live.

Pilgrimage to West was revealed the ugly reality more vividly and powerfully. For example, it revealed the rulers of luxury, corruption and incompetence. There described the Heaven Palace feasts, high curative value nectar, Dragon Liver Chicken marrow, bear bile scarlet lips and food products repeatedly. There had everything that one expected to find, and the best of luxury capabilities. Deities profligacy on one hand. On the other hand, they corrupted just like the Wind Osiris steal to alter life and death book from "back door". There had favoritisms affection frequently in the gods. Even on the Holy Land, two big disciple of the Buddha side, Nuo and Race, and also open to took bribes from Tang's monk, after refused, Nuo conspire with Race, they took the scriptures with no words to Tang's monk. The big four Dragon King gave everything that the Sun Wukong imposed to him. Yama let Sun Wukong ticked off the name on the life and death book. A highly potential of the jade emperor and the heavenly queen were also having no ideas to Sun Wukong.

Taunt Legal Injustice. Two novels reveal the legal injustice then put forward the question of the rationality of the existing social. In *Pilgrim's Progress*, the Vanity trial is a great irony of hypocrisy and corruption of the law. When Christian who said to Truth and was arrested, the jury is Blind, Lewd, the witnesses were Jealousy, Superstitious, and Lackey judgment and the result was Loyalty was executed, Christian was sentenced to death. This plot was the prototype of notorious justice Judge Jeffreys, it real trial very pointedly tackling a reality. In *Pilgrimage to West*, karma is a main topic, but the weight of the karma punishment was not due to the size of the crime but due to the size of the "background". Monsters Cradle of Fear, but as long as it is bodhisattva or God's relatives and cronies, all lightly. Green Cow Lower bound of the crisis of the Old King; it had not given any sanctions. The Buddha's Green Lions, Elephants and DaPeng gone to lower bound as a demon; they brought huge disaster to human beings. As they were lined up by their masters, they did the things they originally ly hadn't caused any damage. However, those little fairies who didn't had any "background". Once they convicted, they would have got a felony. Monk Pig was marshal of the Heavenly Canopy, when molesting a fairy after drunk a lot of wine, lashing; he was whipped for five thousand times and reincarnated as a pig. The novel reflects the law of injustice.

Conclusions

Since ancient times, human beings have survived and developed by living with contradictions and conflicts in nature and society. On one hand, people have to face the reality of life. On the other hand, they always long for the ideal world fully. Literature, as a mirror of life, not only reflects the reality of life, but also expresses people's dreams and ideals.

The two novels write about how the religious believers' pursuit the highest state of their religion-heaven for Christian, western paradise for Buddhist. After many sufferings, they eventually achieve the highest religious ideal. Both of them criticize the reality through religion. Though the British people in the 17th century and the Chinese in the 16th century lived in different settings of cultures and religions, they can always face the reality but still harbor dreams.

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